SAINTSHIP
No ground of
SOVERAIGNTY:
OR A
TREATISE
Tending to prove,
That the SAINTS, barely considered as such, ought not to GOVERN.

By *Edw: Bagshaw*, Student of *Ch: Ch:*

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To the Honorable

JOHN DORMER Esq;

A Member of

PARLIAMENT.

Worthy Sir,

THough the manner of my Life and nature of my Studies doth lead me to affect a more then ordinary Retiredneſs and Privacy, yet I neither am, nor ought to be ſo great a ſtranger to the paſſages of Providence amongſt us, as not to take notice what great things it hath pleaſed God of late to doe for this Nation; if not by compleating our hopes, yet at leaſt by preventing our fears, and bringing us within ſome nearer view of Settlement: Whileſt others therefore are taken up with celebrating the Authors, and magnifying the means of our deliverance: I have a little made it my buſineſſe to ſearch into the cauſe of our Danger; which

if once rightly ſtated, will be a direction for our preſent Senators, to ſecure themſelves againſt that Rock, on which the Ship of the COMMON-WEALTH *hath almoſt been ruined. And herein there was no need of any long ſtudy; for who does not ſee, that the too free venting of all ſorts of Opinions, and that by all ſorts of men, how ignorant and unconcerned ſoever, will, if not reſtrained, for ever keep us a Divided, and conſequently, make us an Unſetled People? Amongſt thoſe many Principles, which are now let looſe upon us, (to exerciſe the Faith and Patience of this laſt Age) there is none that I know of, which doth either more immediately conduce to the ruine of all Civil Government, or had a greater influence, in the pretences at leaſt, of the Actors, upon our late unwarrantable Diſturbances, then this which I have here endeavored to confute. For let this once be granted, that our Saviour is a Temporal Prince, and that onely thoſe have a right to Govern who have by Faith an Intereſt in him, preſently a door is opened to all manner of Rebellion and Treaſon; nay, there can be no ſuch Crimes in the World, if Religion,*

gion, and a deſign to advance our Saviours Kingdom, be once made the pretence to authorize them. Indeed the conſequents are ſo fatall and horrid, and the remembrance of Munſter *Affairs (which were acted by the ſame ſpirit) ſo freſh, and recent, that it might almoſt ſeem needleſs to endeavor any other confutation, then a bare relating of that Story.* Sleid. lib. 10.

But Sir, that I may take here that liberty, which you have hitherto always indulged me, of ſpeaking my thoughts: I never yet looked upon that way of confuting an Error, which the Arminian *Writers do uſually tread in, to be either Rational or Convincing; I mean, by urging the Inconveniences and ill Conſequences of the Doctrine we diſpute againſt: For it is one Queſtion, What is true? and another, What is convenient? and after all thoſe Tragical Inferences, wherewith men ſeek to affright unwary and unobſerving Readers, yet this will be an eternal Axiome, That truth is truth, let the conſequences be what they will; and the more harſh and repugnant any Doctrine, if plainly revealed, ſeems unto Naturall Reaſon, the greater is our Faith, and the*

more ſignall our Obedience, if we notwithſtanding do ſubmit unto and embrace it. In proſecution therefore of this Deſign (which I have laid down to my ſelf, as the onely ſatisfactory way of deciding all Controverſies in Divinity) I have not inquired ſo much how dangerous, or how deſtructive and ruinous the contrary Doctrine is, as how it is written; *and ſo have proceeded by direct proof, to ſhew that their Opinion who would have Soveraignty founded upon that bottom, is utterly unſcriptural; for that it is unreaſonable, I think none makes any queſtion. And therefore I hope this Treatiſe may be uſeful for thoſe* who erre, not knowing the Scriptures, *and following the ſound of words, have not leiſure, nor perhaps ability, to look into the ſenſe of them. Had I conſulted my own credit, I might have made this Diſcourſe more plauſible, by filling up my Pages with the Authority of ancient Writers; but I purpoſely forbore, both becauſe thoſe, for whoſe ſakes I mainly publiſh it, are not acquainted with any thing of Chriſtianity, more then their Engliſh Bibles do inſtruct them in; and likewiſe becauſe I thought it needleſs, having ſo much of Divine Authority for my Text, to croud humane Teſti-*

monies

monies into the Margin; since such mixtures doe usually make a good Cause suspected.

Sir, Whatever it is, I humbly present it to you, and doubt not, how rude and inartificial soever it seems, but it will finde entertainment among those who love seasonable Truths, if you please first to honor it with your Acceptance: Whose Piety, Prudence, Integrity, and Zeal for your Countrys Liberty and Welfare, have as much advanced you in the Esteem and Judgement of all sober and unprejudiced men, as your many personal Favours in the Heart and Affections, of,

Worthy Sir,

Ch: Ch: Jan. 26. 1659.

Your most obliged, and most humbly devoted Servant,

Edw: Bagshaw.

Saintship

SAINTSHIP

No ground of

SOVERAIGNTY.

INtending to prove out of Scripture that the Saints ought not to governe the earth, in that ſenſe which is now by ſome contended for, I ſhall take for the ground of my diſcourſe thoſe words of our Saviour to *Pilate*, when he ſaid, *My kingdom is not of this world*, which words are very conſiderable, whether we regard the Perſon who, the Time when, or the Manner how they were ſpoken. *Joh.*18.36

1. For the Perſon who ſpoke them, it was no leſſe then our Saviour *Chriſt*, each of whoſe ſpeeches, how occaſionall ſoever, ought to be unto us ſo many Precepts and Obligations to Duty.

2. For the Time when they were ſpoken, it was juſt then when he was taking his leave of Earth, that 1 *Tim.* 6. 13. *he witneſſed before Pilate a good confeſſion*, of which, this Aſſertion is the greateſt Part: ſo that if the words of dying men do uſe to make the greateſt impreſſions, then ought theſe of our Saviour, even upon that account, to quicken our Attention.

Laſtly, for the Manner how they were ſpoken, it was not only after a Reſolved and ſeemingly Obſtinate ſilence, *Marc.* 15. 5. *in ſo much as the Governour marveiled*, but in direct Anſwer to *Pilate's* Queſtion, who was very deſirous to know, whether our Saviour was *King* or not; ſo that our Saviour's Purpoſed and Poſitive diſavowing any Temporall or Earthly Kingdome,

dome; his redoubling this Aſſertion in the following part of the verſe, *My Kingdome is not from hence*; his repeating and inſiſting upon it againe in the next verſe, as a *bearing witneſſe to the Truth*, ought to convince us that our Saviour was in earneſt, and therefore the matter is very Conſiderable.

If therefore we put all this together, viz. the Authority of the Perſon, the Exigence of the time, joyned with thoſe Vehement and Reiterated Circumſtances, wherewith theſe words are Accompanied, we may from thence conclude, that they containe in them a leſſon, of more then ordinary concernment to us.

For the more Full and cleare underſtanding of them, we muſt have recourſe to one of the foregoing Chapters, where we find that the *chiefe Prieſts* and *Phariſees*, being informed of our Saviours Miracles, and of that great Reſort of Followers unto him, (which were enough *Joh.* 11. 47

at any time, if micheivouſly inclined to raiſe a Commotion in the State,) upon this they preſently called a *Councell*, or, according to the Greeks, a *Sanhedrim*, which was the Supreme and Higheſt Court of Judicature among them, and unto which, if *Joſephus* doth rightly informe us, even their Kings were Accountable. Here being convened they fall to debate about the beſt Expedient, how to cut our Saviour off, for fear their tolerating one, who was Publickly voiced for King, and ſo ſtiled likewiſe by himſelfe, (though in a far other ſenſe then they interpreted it) might be conſtrued by the *Romanes* (to whom the *Jewes* were at that time Tributaries) as a deſigne to ſhake off their Yoke, and thereby provoke them to an utter extirpation of the Jewiſh Policy, which untill then, notwithſtanding their Conqueſt, they had in great meaſure preſerved Entire. Thus therefore we find them Argue, *If we let him alone, all men will*

Συνέδριον.

Αρχαιολ. lib. 4.

Mat. 21. 5. & *Joh.* 18.

will believe on him, and the Romanes will come, and take away our Place and Nation. v. 48.

To this Inſinuation, which ſeemed to conclude their Neceſſity of our Saviour's Death, *Caiphas* addes ſomething, by which he endeavors to prove that Unjuſt Attempt to be not only Neceſſary, but very Plauſible too; and therefore he pleads *Salus Populi*, the *Publick Good* is urged to palliate this execrable Murther: *You*, ſaith he, *know nothing at all, neither conſider that it is expedient one man ſhould dye for the People, that the Nation periſh not*: - as if he had ſaid, You are very Weake and Unskilfull Politicians to boggle at ſuch a Caſe as this, and to debate thus long upon a matter of ſo eaſie ſolution; for Right or Wrong the *Publick Safety* muſt be provided for; and it is a great Folly and want of Foreſight to preferre one man's life, how Innocent ſoever, before a Nations Welfare. In which wicked ſpeech, though *Caiphas* v. 50.

iphas did by God's appointment Prophetically foretell *that great good which would redound to the World by*
v. 52. *our Saviour's Death*, yet as to his own Intention, he meant no more then a Juſtifying of that Accurſed,
Rom. 3. 8. and, in the Apoſtle *Paul's* ſenſe, accounted *Damnable* Maxime, viz. *That we may do Evill, that Good may come thereof*, which Tenet, whereever it is aſſented to, will be the Mother of thoſe Miſchiefs which men have either Felt or Feared: I am ſure it ſo far prevailed with that Juncto of Senators, that the Text ſaith *From that Time they took Counſell,*
v. 53. *how to put him*, i. e. our Saviour, *to Death.*

Our Saviour's Death being thus agreed on by the *Phariſees*, and in their deep Policy reſolved to be Neceſſary in reſpect of the *Romanes*, and very Advantageous too in reference to the *Jewes*; the Contrivers make no long Delay, but what they had before ſo unjuſtly concluded on, we find

find them presently after as cruelly execute. For having by their own Authority apprehended our Saviour, and being it seemes debarred to judg of Capitall Causes within themselves, (*it is not*, say they to *Pilate*, *lawfull for us to put any Man to Death*) they hale him before *Pilate* the *Romane* Præfect, and there with Loud Clamorous Outcries demand Justice against him. But lest their Noise should not prevaile with a *Romane*, and therein, so far as related to the *Jewish* Affaires, an Unconcerned and Dispassionate Judge, with a Formall story in their Mouths, disguising the Malice of their Hearts, they Article against him as a *Malefactour*, i. e. according to the Importance of the Greek word, *a seditious Person*, *a Disturber of the State*, a *Subverter of Government*, an *Enemy of Cesar*, *an Ambitious Affecter to be in Fact*, *as well as in Title*, *King of the* Jewes; which False and scandalous Charge we have insinuated by *John*, but

v. 32.

κακοποιὸς.

ch. 23. 2. but is at large expreſſed by *Luke*, *we found*, ſay they, *this fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give Tribute unto Ceſar, ſaying, that he himſelfe is Chriſt a King.*

Pilate hearing this Accuſation, which, if True, ſtrook ſo immediatelyat *Ceſar's* power; and the Gravity and ſeeming Sanctity ofour Saviours Accuſers, would not let him ſuſpect it to be Falſe, he therefore, waving all other ſuggeſtions, haſtily askes our Saviour, whether he was King
v. 33. or not, *Art thou*, ſayes he, *the King of the Jewes?* To which Queſtion our Saviour returnes an Anſwer in the words I have already alleaged, wherein he intimates that he was indeed a *King*, and that he had a *Kingdome*; but that his *Kingdome* was of ſuch a Nature, as *Pilate* need not be Jealous of, nor apprehend any danger from it; as if it were intended to enterfere or Juſtle with *Ceſar's* Soveraignty; for, ſaith he, *my Kingdome is not of this Word.* As if he had ſaid,

I am indeed a *King*, and I have a *Kingdome*, but you need not fear any Diſturbance to your Secular Intereſts, by ſetting up of my *Kingdome* amongſt you, for though it be *in the World*, it is not *of the world*; nor hath any Commerce or Society, either with the Power or Policy thereof.

This being the Plaine and Direct meaning of our Saviour's words, I ſhall briefly explaine what *Kingdome* it is that our Saviour meanes, when he ſaies, *my Kingdome*, &c.

I find in Scripture that our Saviour is called a *King* upon a four-fold account,

1. By *Power*. Thus he is King of the World, and hath a ſoveraignty Paramount, being one God with the Father, and the ſame Power, by which he made the World, he daily exerts for the continuing and preſerving of it. *Heb.* 1. 1, 2.

2. By *Birth*: thus he was King of the Jewes, being *Heire apparent* to the Crown, and lineally deſcended

ded from *David*, in whom the Kingdom was veſted with a promiſe of its perpetuity; *from him, according to the fleſh, our Saviour came,* and therefore had a Star to adorn and declare his Nativity; God herein ſeeming to comply with the Opinions of thoſe, who think the Heavens are more then ordinarily concerned in the Affairs of Princes, and therefore ſtrange Appearances, and unuſual Comets do attend both their birth and death, For nothing elſe, for ought we know, but the Prodigy of that Blazing Star (without any more immediate Inſtinct) did excite the curioſity of the Eaſtern *Magi*, to go and ſee that Perſon, whoſe Nativity was in ſo wonderful a manner celebrated: *Where is*, ſay they, *he that is born King of the Jews? for we have ſeen his Star in the Eaſt*: *i*. We have deſcryed a Star of an unuſual Aſpect, but yet ſuch an one, as, according to the rules of our Art, diſcovers that a Prince is born in *Judea*, and we are come

προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ, *i. e. To bow to him, and pay him homage.* [a]

(a) Orig. contr. Cels. lib. 1. p. 45. Attributes their coming to a response of the Devils, upon their doing their Rites of Conjuration: but I conceive the opinion, I mention, is more probable.

3. By *designation* and *appointment of his Father*: Thus our Saviour Christ is King of all the Heathen, according to that Prophesie of *Jacob*, *When Shiloh comes*, *unto him shall* יקהת *the obedience or gathering of the Gentiles be*: And many Predictions there are of the same importance, which if they are to be meant of every Individual Heathen (and not rather signifie that the Heathen shall not be excluded from being reckoned amongst our Saviours subjects, now in times of Christianity) we have no ground from Scripture to expect that they shall be actually accomplished until our Saviours second coming, at which time the Saints shall reign with him: Which is the meaning of that promise of our Saviours, *He that overcomes*, i. all difficulties, *and keeps my*

my words unto the end, i. perſeveres in the Chriſtian Faith, *I will give him power over the Heathen*, &c. *even as I have received of my Father*, i. Hereafter, he ſhall reign with me, not in this life, but when he hath exchanged this for a better.

Laſtly, By *Pact or Covenant*: thus our Saviour is *King* of *Believers* onely; as a Prince he gives us Laws, invites us with Rewards, deters us by Puniſhments, and hath left nothing unaſſayed, which may either perſwade or enforce obedience; governing of his People by his Word and Spirit, unto a complyance with his commands; and this Dominion he will always exerciſe to the Worlds end. Of which inward, inviſible Kingdom it is, that our Saviour is to be underſtood, when he ſaith, *My kingdom is not of this world*, i. not a Political, viſible, and earthly one.

From all that hath been ſaid, I infer this Concluſion, *That if Chriſts kingdom be not of this world, there is none*

can,

can, upon the account of their intereſt in Chriſt, plead any Right or Title unto earthly Soveraignty: or more briefly thus, *That inward Saintſhip is not a ground of outward Empire.* Theſis.

This collection which I make is very eaſie and natural, for if our Saviour did diſclaim all earthly Juriſdiction in himſelf, then ſure none can, upon pretence of their intereſt in him, put in their Plea for it: If our Saviour, as he lived an humble, ſelf-denying life, ſo dyed in an utter abhorrence of temporal Soveraignty; and ſpent thoſe few laſt words he vouchſafed to utter, in a direct denyal of worldly greatneſs: then certainly his example weighs little with us, and his lateſt breath was ſpent in vain, if we, upon a Chriſtian account, ſtill affect Empire, or make our Religion the way to outward preferment. It is our Saviours own reaſoning, and bottomed upon the inalterable nature of things, that *the ſervant is not greater then his maſter*: If therefore our *Maſter*

ſter would not be called *Lord*, certainly the *ſervants* ought not to deſire it; if Chriſt refuſed Empire, with what face can *Chriſtians* ambition it? or how can they call themſelves *Saints*, and yet ſeek to be advanced in power above their *Saviour?*

Now though the bare authority of our Saviour might alone ſerve to convince thoſe that are Chriſtians indeed (for ſo far as they are ſuch, they are to be imitators of Chriſt) yet becauſe the matter is of ſo much weight, and hath of late been too unhappily diſputed, I ſhall therefore endeavour more at large to demonſtrate it, from theſe two Heads of Arguments.

1. From the nature of Civil Government in general.

2. From the nature of Chriſtian Religion in particular.

Firſt, That Saintſhip is not the ground of Soveraignty, appears from the nature of Civil Government in general: for this belongs to men, not

as they are Chriſtians, but as they are men; and is a conſequent, not of our ſpiritual, but of our naturall Birth.

To clear up this, I ſhall not unravel the whole Myſtery of Policy, as ſome too unwarily, (if not deſignedly) do, who lay down ſuch Principles of Politicks, as give juſt occaſion to make their Religion ſuſpected: I ſhall therefore inſiſt onely upon thoſe Grounds which the Scripture affords, onely thoſe being ſufficient to convince a gainſaying, or to ſatiſfie a ſcrupling conſcience. And to begin with the firſt Original of man, we finde, when God made man, it is ſaid, that *in the Image of God created he him*, and thereupon *bleſſed him, and gave him dominion over the Creatures*. Now there is a twofold *Image* of God, Supernatural, and Natural: Supernatural, I call thoſe impreſſions of Sanctity and Holineſs, which are now loſt: Natural, is that reſemblance which the ſoul of man hath to the Gen. 1. 28.

the nature of God, as to its being and operation: *viz.* As God is a Spirit Immortal, Inviſible, *&c.* ſo the ſoul of man is of a Spirituall, Immortall, Inviſible nature; which Image yet remains entire in the worſt of men: Of this Image it is that God ſpeaks, when he forbids Murther, *Who ſo*
Gen. 9 6. *ſheddeth mans blood*, ſaith he, *by him ſhall mans blood be ſhed, becauſe in the image of God created he man*; i. e. he put a Spirit of life and underſtanding into him, the conſideration of which invaluable Jewel within, ought to make us preſerve the Casket without, *i. e.* the Body, ſacred and inviolable.

Which of theſe two Images it is that external Dominion over the Creature belongs to, is clear out of the ſame Chapter, where God renews his grant to all the Sons of *Noah:*
v. 2. *The fear of you*, ſaith he, *and the dread of you, fall upon every beaſt of the earth*, &c. *into your hand*, *i. e.* power to diſpoſe of as you pleaſe, *are they de-*

delivered: In which general grant, there are none of the ſons of men excluded, becauſe it is a *Birth-priviledge*; and profane *Cham* had upon that ſcore as large a ſhare in, and as true a title to the free uſe of all outward things, as any of his more Religious Brethren.

This is that Civil Right which *Abraham* acknowledged in the King of *Sodom*, (and what kinde of abominable ſinners the *Sodomites* were, I need not mention) when he refuſed to be enriched by him; *I will not*, ſaith he, *take any thing of thine*; by which word *Thine*, he owns that the King of *Sodom* had a True, Legal Propriety, even in thoſe goods, which *Abraham* might have challenged as the Fruits of his Victory: This Right afterwards *Abraham* conteſſed to be in *Abimelech*, when he made a League with him not to hurt or injure him, *i.* not to deprive him of any thing which was his. But moſt of all this appears in the bargain and ſale which *Abra-*

Gen 14.23

Gen.21.23

Gen.23.

ham made with the Sons of *Heth*; when *Abraham*, though by Gods abſolute grant, the undoubted heir of all the Land of *Canaan*, yet the time for the accompliſhment of that promiſe not being yet come, he refuſed to receive the Cave of *Macpelah*, to make uſe of it for a burying place, until he had paid a valuable conſideration in money for it.

Obj. *If any ſhall here object that* Abraham *at that time wanted power to make good his claim, and therefore was content to buy, what otherwiſe he might have forced.*

Anſ. The vanity and falſhood (I will adde too, the impiety) of this Plea appears from hence, in that we finde *David* afterwards uſing the very ſame terms of obſervance and re-
2 Sam. 21. ſpect unto *Araunah* a *Jebuſite*, one neither of the ſame Nation nor Religion with himſelf: Which inſtance ſerves very much to clear the queſtion in hand, for *David* was not onely a Saint by priviledge (if that ſignified any

any thing to give a right) but a King by power, and might have forced it: nay, he was commanded by God, to make uſe of that very place to ſacrifice in, and therefore might have pretended an inſpiration to juſtifie his violent ſeizure; and beſides, to make the matter a little more fair and plauſible, he, whom *David* dealt with, was an Heathen, and for ought we know, an Idolater: Yet all theſe advantages did not make *David* ſwerve from the Rules of common Juſtice, but up he went with all his Retinue to *Araunah*, in a ſuppliant poſture, that he *might buy his threſhing floor*: And when *Araunah* frankly offered to give it him, the Spirit of God hath recorded it, not as an act of Juſtice in him, but of Royal Bounty: *Araunah, as a king, gave unto the King.* ver 23.

Obj. *It uſeth to be urged againſt this, that the* Iſraelites, *which were Gods People, did deſtroy the* Canaanites, *and inherit their Land.*

Anſw. But the Anſwer is eaſie,

That as God did not chooſe them to be his people, becauſe they were more holy then others, but meerly becauſe he had ſet his heart upon them. So neither did he give them the Land of *Canaan*, upon the account of their *Saintſhip*, but onely to make good his promiſe unto *Abraham*, and by their hands to avenge himſelf of the *Canaanites*, whoſe iniquitys were then full and ripe for vengeance.

This reaſon is expreſly given by *Moſes* himſelf, *Not for thy righteouſneſs*, ſaith he, *or for the uprightneſs of thy heart, doeſt thou go to poſſeſs their Land; but for the wickedneſs of theſe nations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord ſware unto thy Fathers.* God indeed is the great Proprietor of all things, but yet he hath given the Earth, without diſtinction, to all the Sons of Men; onely reſerving to himſelf this Right, That when they do ingratefully abuſe his gift, he doth always diſpoſſeſſe them,

Deut. 9. 5.

theſſ, and give their inheritance unto others: but though this be the method of Gods Judgements, yet it doth not excuſe any people from a tranſcendent Crime, who take upon them to be the executors of Gods Decrees againſt the wicked. *Joſhuah* therefore, whileſt he was in the hotteſt purſuit of that promiſed Poſſeſſion, never pleaded any thing to juſtifie his actings, but the particular command of God, who bad him *go and deſtroy thoſe Nations*: this alone made it a pious War, which otherwiſe would have been nothing elſe but a publick Robbery: We finde alſo, that when God, as the ſupream Diſpoſer, gave to the *Iſraelites* the Land of *Canaan*, he, at the ſame time, expreſly forbids them to meddle with the Land of the children of *Ammon*; but had relation to God given them any right, that Land would have equally belonged to them with the other: *When thou comeſt*, ſaith he, *nigh unto the children of* Ammon, *diſtreſs them not*, Deut. 11. 17.

nor meddle with them; for I will not give thee of the Land of the children of Ammon *any poſſeſsion, becauſe I have given it unto the children of* Lot *for a poſſeſsion.* Where we ſee the children of *Lot*, though Idolatrous, yet were not to be diſturbed in their poſſeſſion, becauſe the ſame God who ſaid to the children of *Iſrael*, *Goe, Poſſeſſe Canaan*, ſaid to the Children of *Lot*, *Goe, Poſſeſs the Land of Ammon.* Whereby, as to their civil Claims, and temporal Rights, God makes no diſtinction betwixt the one, though his own peculiar, and the other, though a profane and Idolatrous people.

But if Heathen unregenerate men have, upon the account of their being men, a Title to other things, then certainly to Dominion much more; which ſerves onely to ſecure our other Priviledges, and is, if rightly ſtated, nothing elſe but a conſequent of Propriety.

I ſhall therefore conclude this firſt Argu-

Argument, which I think abundantly convincing, with that remarkable Controverſie between God and the Jews, concerning their obedience to *Nebuchadnezzar*. The Jews, though undoubted poſſeſſors of *Canaan*, yet after they were by *Nebuchadnezzar* conquered, and, to preſerve ſome little remains of Liberty and Livelyhood, had taken an Oath of Fealty and Allegiance to him; we finde, upon ſome reaſon of State, they were preſently induced to break it, and God as ſpeedily threatens to avenge it ſeverely upon them. The ſad condition of that Oath, how it was a Covenant only to enſlave themſelves and their Poſterity for ever, God himſelf doth declare, thereby to prevent their Objection: *The King of Babylon*, ſaith he, *hath taken of the Kings ſeed*, i. Zedekiah, *and made a Covenant with him, and taken an oath of him, that the Kingdom might be baſe, that it might not lift it ſelf up*, *i. e.* that it might for ever quit the

Ezek. 17. v. 13 14.

pretence of being a *Free People*, and truckle under the Dominion of the *Chaldeans*: This Yoke, then which nothing can be more inſupportable, and to which the Jews had been ſo long unaccuſtomed, they preſently ſhook off; for it follows in the next Verſe, *But he*, i. Zedekiah, *rebelled*, with what ſucceſs, we have too much reaſon in this Nation to read and tremble[a]: *Seeing he deſpiſed the oath, by breaking the Covenant, when loe, he had given his hand* (*i.* with hands lifted up, had ſolemnly ratified it) *he ſhall not eſcape: Therefore, as I live, ſaith the Lord, my Covenant which he hath broken, and my Oath which he hath deſpiſed, will I recompenſe upon his own head*: From which ſad place, others perhaps will draw other inferences, but I ſhall collect onely theſe three things.

(a) *Ar-mies Plea, &c.* v. 18, 19.

1. That in every Oath God is a Party, and will be ſure to puniſh the violater of it; though men may break their Oathes, with as much eaſe as

Samſon

Samſon did his *Withs*, yet God will be ſure to keep his, and he hath ſworn to Puniſh.

2. When once a man hath ſworne, he cannot reſume againe that naturall Liberty, which he was before poſſeſſed of, becauſe by his owne voluntary Act he hath deveſted himſelfe of it, and thereby bound himſelfe over to Divine vengeance, if he do not performe the Condition of his Covenant.

Laſtly, if the Jewes, who had ſo much to plead for themſelves, both upon a Civil and Religious Account, as being not onely a Free, but likewiſe a Godly People, might yet paſſe away their whole Liberty unto an Heathen Prince, and by vertue of their Oath be debarred for ever from forceable ſeeking a Re-enveſtiture; but were obliged, not onely to ſubmit unto him as their Conquerour, but after Faith given, to obey him as their Soveraigne; if I ſay, the Caſe ſtood thus with them, then certainly

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no Pretence of Sanctitie can abſolve us now from ſuch Ties of Obedience, in the Times of the Goſpell; which doth as farre tranſcend the Jewiſh Politie in Peaceableneſſe of Diſpoſition, as in Purity of Doctrine, therefore,

Arg: 2. Secondly, that Saintſhip is not the ground of Soveraignty will yet farther appeare from the Nature of Chriſtian Religion in particular, whether we reſpect, 1. Its Precepts. 2. Its Promiſes. 3. The manner of propagating it. 4. The Practiſe of the Apoſtles, and other Profeſſours in the pureſt and moſt Primitive Times.

Firſt, This appeares from Goſpell Precepts: for there is nothing more frequently or vehemently injoyned by our Saviour, then *ſelfe denyall*. The command doth not run,

Mat:16.24 *Take a Kingdome*, but, *Take up your Croſſe and follow me. Learne of me*, ſaith our Saviour, he doth not adde, For this is the way to Honour, for I can

can point you out a Path to Preferment, but *Learn of me, for I am meeke and Lowly.* i. I have equalled my ſelfe to the meaneſt of the ſons of men, I have not where to lay my head, and am ſo little deſirous of worldly Greatneſs, that I have voluntarily deveſted my ſelfe of a greater Royalty, then the world can comprehend; and all this I have done, to ſhow you a Patterne of Humility. Therefore when the Diſciple, (who before our Saviours Reſurrection, did as much miſtake the meaning of his Kingdome, as ſome amongſt us now do) did contend amongſt themſelves who ſhould be greateſt, how ſharply doth our Saviour reprehend this Ambitious ſtrife? Ἐὰν μὴ στραφῆτε *If you be not turned,* i. quite changed, as it were, into another Nature, and *become as little Children,* as careleſs and ſecure of greatneſs, as little ſwelled and leavened with Ambition, *you ſhall in no wiſe enter into the Kingdome of Heaven:* whereby the *Kingdome*

Mat:11.26

Mat:18.3.

dome of Heaven: whether we underſtand Grace or Glory, whether it meanes Initiall or Compleat Happineſſe, it is all one to the Queſtion in hand, for it clearly proves, that to affect Temporall Greatneſſe and Promotion, is utterly inconſiſtent either with holineſſe here, or with our hopes hereafter. I need not multiply more Texts, for the whole deſigne of the Goſpell is aimed at nothing elſe, but to level, and lower our Thoughts unto the ſize of our Saviours meekneſſe, to beat down the tumour and ſwelling, and agitation of our Spirits in reference to worldly things, to empty and deveſt our ſoules of all that wind of Ambition, wherewith poore miſerable men, who have no better Hopes, are conſtantly toſſed and perplexed. And the reaſon for this is unanſwerable, for, if, as our Saviour hath ſtated it, *None can ſerve God and Mammon*, then none can ſerve God & Honour, we cannot ſerve God, and gaine a Kingdome; much leſſe are we

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to make one, prepare the way for the other: for this would be to invert the Intent of the Gospell, and make it a setter up of what it was principally discovered to beat downe; whereby it would become nothing else, but a Ladder for Ambition to climbe by.

Secondly, This appeares likewise from Gospell Promises; for these as they are constantly annexed to the Poore, the Humble, the Mortified, the selfe denying Christian, so they are alwayes about such things, as are most remote and distant from Temporall Enjoyments *Blessed*, saith our Saviour, *are the poore in spirit*, he doth not adde, for theirs shall be the Kingdome of Earth, but, *Theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven.* According to the Analogie of which Promises, must that Text be understood, which while they fixe onely upon the Literall meaning, hath deluded so many, *Blessed are the Meek, for they shall Inherit the Earth.* i. τὴν γῆν, *illam Terram, That Earth*, which was Matth. 5.

promised

promiſed in a Type, and is Figuratively Heaven, as the Author to the Hebrewes hath elegantly proved. For that neither that place, nor any other in the N. T. can be underſtood abſolutely of any outward and Earthly Happineſſe, is cleare, becauſe all that we Chriſtians can certainly expect in this world, by virtue of a Promiſe, is onely Afflictions. *In the VVorld,* ſaith our Saviour to his Diſciples, and therein to all who will be like them, *you ſhall have Tribulation:* this was the laſt Legacy he left them, and therefore, ſaith he, *ye ſhall have it,* reſt ye as certaine of it, as of your Inheritance or Patrimony. And the Apoſtle, who very well underſtood our Saviour's meaning, laies it down as a Fundamentall in Religion, *All that will live Godly in Chriſt, muſt ſuffer Perſecution*; they muſt ſuffer, there is no avoiding it. For this Fatall attendance of Perſecution upon Piety it is, that our Saviour hath provided us ſo many Cordialls and

Heb:11.13 16.

Joh:16.33

2Tim:3.12

and Comfortable *Receipts* in Scripture, as when he bids us *to rejoice,* and *be exceeding glad:* nay σκιρτᾶτε, *to skip and dance for Joy,* when such Afflictions do moſt beſet us; for they are evidences of our Sonſhip, and aſſured ſignes that God hath a Care of us: all which Expreſſions would have been very vaine and uſeleſſe, if ever Religion ſhould be abuſed to thoſe Ends, that the ſuffering might become the Afflicting Party; if a Chriſtian could not only exempt himſelfe from Injuries, but returne them upon others, and challenge Authority here, as a Reward of his Pietty. For this would not only deprive us of the Priviledge (ſo the Apoſtles counted it) of Martyrdome, but would have none fit to be Perſecuted, but onely the Wicked; and this is an Honour, which I hope no true Chriſtian but envies them. Τοῦτο ἐχαρίσθη, *To you,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *it is given of grace, not only to believe on Chriſt, but likewiſe to ſuffer for his Name.* Mat: 5. &c. Heb. 12. Phil: 1.15

Name. We are miſtaken, whilſt we ſo much dread Affliction: for it is not a Judgment, no nor an Evill neither to ſuffer, but χαρισμα, *a Gift*, a peculiar Boone, a choice Indulgence of God unto his Favourites. So the Apoſtle *Peter* bids thoſe he writes to not be diſcouraged, or *count it ſtrange*, if the *Fiery Tryall* had its effect upon them, as well as upon others; *for*, ſaith he, *unto this were ye called:* as if he had ſaid, be ſure you look, nay long for it; for if you miſſe of this, you have ſome reaſon to doubt the Truth of your *Calling*. All which places, with many more to the ſame purpoſe, how any can reconcile to an Affecting of Temporall Greatneſſe, let them reſolve who love a Secure, an Eaſie, a Specious, a Proſperous Religion, ſuch an one as Chriſt never came to teach, nor any of his Followers died to eſtabliſh.

1 *Pet.* 11. 21. μὴ ξενιζεσθε.

Obj. It is very true, what ſome, with a little too much guſt and reliſh of worldly-mindedneſs, alledge, That every

every true Chriſtian is heir of a Kingdom, and ought to live in expectation of ſuch Glory and Greatneſs, as whatever the world hath, can but imperfectly ſhadow out: With this our Saviour doth buoy up, and revive the ſinking ſpirits of his Diſciples: *Be of good comfort*, ſaith he, *for it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you a Kingdom*: It is this we pray for, this we are to be in a readineſs for daily.

Anſw. But yet it is as true too, that, ſo long as we live here, this is a Kingdom in expectation onely; Fleſh nor Blood, neither ſhall nor can inherit it. As we muſt firſt put off Mortality, before we can put on Eternal Life; ſo we muſt put off earth and earthly-mindedneſs, before we can expect any ſhare in that bleſſed Inheritance.

There are, amongſt many other, two very remarkable places to clear this: The one is our Saviours anſwer to *Peter*, upon his Diſcourſe with the *young man*: For our Saviour having

pronounced ſo ſevere, and yet ſo peremptory a doom againſt rich men, as
δυσκόλως. that a *rich man could ſcarcely be ſaved*; he repeats it again, and makes it to be altogether as great a Moral Impoſſibility, for a man that is clogged with Wealth, and loaded with worldly Cares, *to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, (that τεθλιμμένην ὁδὸν, the *narrowed, preſſed, and ſtreightned way*) as it would be a natural impoſſibility for a *Camel to go through the eye of a needle*. Upon this we finde the Diſciples were exceedingly amazed, not onely as miſſing of their hopes, but likewiſe as being conſcious to themſelves, that though they were not, yet they did all deſire to be rich; whereupon *Peter*, in the name of the reſt, replies, *Behold, we have left all and followed thee, what ſhall we have therefore?* As if he had ſaid, Shall we venture to looſe all, and yet be ſo great loſers by the bargain, as to be altogether unprovided of a recompence? our Saviour therefore to quit them,

them, and to take them off from ſuch ſenſual deſires, which he ſaw poſſeſſed them: *Verily*, ſaith he, *ye that have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man ſits upon his Throne of Glory, ſhall ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Iſrael*: In which words our Saviour doth promiſe them a great and a glorious reward, *viz.* to be Kings and Judges with himſelf, but yet defers the fruition of it, until the Παλιγγενεσία, i. *The reſtauration of all things*, when neither Mortality nor Miſery ſhall be any more, but every thing ſhall be reſtored unto that Primitive Integrity and Luſtre, wherein they were at firſt created.

The other place which manifeſts the nature of Chriſts Kingdom, is that Anſwer which our Saviour returned to the Mother of *Zebedees* Children, who, it ſeems, miſtaking the true notion of it, and fixing her thoughts upon an earthly Empire, petitioned our Saviour for her two ſons, Matth. 20. 20, &c.

That the one might ſit at his right hand, and the other at his left, when he came into his Kingdom, *i.* when he had taken poſſeſſion of the Throne, and was inveſted with the Realm of *Judea*, ſhe humbly begged, that then he would be pleaſed to look favorably upon her two ſons, to make them the *Grandees* and *Minions* of his Court; that they, under him, might enjoy the greateſt Power and Priviledges: But our Saviour, to take them off from ſuch haughty Aims, preſently puts them in minde of *Suf-*
v. 23. *fering*, as a thing much more ſuited to a Chriſtians complexion; and leſt the other Diſciples ſhould be infected with the ſame deſires, he doth for ever ſtrive to ſuppreſs them, as paſſions much more fit for Heathen, then Chriſtian tempers: *Ye know*, ſaith he, *that the Princes of the Gentiles do exerciſe dominion over them, and thoſe that are great, do exerciſe authority upon them: But it ſhall not be ſo amongſt you*: As if he had ſaid,

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The Heathen indeed, who have no other hope, do place all their Heaven upon Earth; they make Fame their Immortality, and Power their Paradiſe; and therefore never reſt ſatiſfied, until they can exerciſe an abſolute and an Arbitrary Dominion over their enſlaved Subjects. But you, who are my Diſciples, and called by my Name, who have a certainty of future Enjoyments, unto whom a Kingdom of a clean different nature is reſerved; you ought not to be like them, but rather ſtrive in humility to excell each other: Wherein our Saviour clearly intimates, that it doth ſo little become a *Saint* to rule, that he is certainly not a *Saint* who doth ambition it: For how can he rationally expect a Kingdom hereafter, who hath outed himſelf of his Plea, by putting in for a Kingdom here? which is nothing elſe, but to antedate the effect of Gods promiſe; or rather with *Dives*, to receive our good things in this life, and to take up with Tem-

poral Joys, when we ſhould patiently have waited for Eternal.

Thirdly, This appears farther, from the manner how Chriſtian Religion was propagated in the World; which, as it is a Religion that doth moſt preciſely forbid compulſion and violence, ſo it was not planted by it. Our Saviour himſelf that taught it, was *as a Lamb that opened not his mouth, but turned his cheek to the ſmiter, and his back to the rod of the wicked*: The Apoſtles, his followers, were accounted the ſcum and offſcouring of the world, *i.* the vileſt of men, and thereupon were diſgraced, perſecuted, tormented: And all this they ſuffered without the return, ſo much as of contumelious Language; how much leſs do we finde them telling the world, that they ought to bear Dominion over them: Yet by theſe Arts alone, they did at firſt Preach, and afterwards promote the Goſpel to the converſion of thouſands. And this, by the way, without

out any further Argument, will ſerve to evidence the Divine Original of Chriſtianity, in that notwithſtanding all theſe diſadvantages, the leaſt of which, in all humane probality, was enough to have ſtifled and ſuppreſſed it in the Womb; yet, in ſpite of all, it took root and proſpered; which could not poſſibly have come to paſs, without the conduct and aſſiſtance of an Almighty Power.

But had our Saviour ſent a Religion into the World, which would have excited mens ambition, and fired our Zeal to the ruine and extirpation of it's Oppoſers: *Quid hoc eximium?* What excellence ſhould there have been in Chriſtian Religion, more then in other Religions? for do not even the Publicans the ſame? Is not this the common method of all Political Combinations, rather then Religions in the World, to riſe by the ruine of ſuch as oppoſe them? But our Saviour took not this courſe: *If*, ſaith he, *my kingdom were of this world*, John 18. 27.

then would my ſervants fight? intimating, that to make way for Religion by force, to lay down a Principle, which muſt needs imbroil the World in Blood and Confuſion, is not Religion, but Rapine; a Sacrilegious deſign, to make Chriſtianity, & the ſtrict Profeſſors of it, odious: For who will not ſuſpect the truth of that Religion, which deſpairing of its own Excellence, and hopeleſs of a better reward, eggs on its followers to take up with Worldly Honor? and under the notion of Sanctity, leaves the Throne expoſed to the Invaſion of every Hypocritical Pretender: *At in initio non fuit ſic?* Our Saviour taught us no ſuch Doctrine, nor did his Apoſtles leave us ſuch a pattern. Therefore,

Laſtly, That Saintſhip gives no right to Civil Empires appears from the practice of the Apoſtles, and other Profeſſors of Chriſtianity in the Pureſt and moſt Primitive Times. Preſently after our Saviours Aſcenſion, when

when by *Peters* Miniſtry ſo many thouſands were converted; we doe not finde him Preaching them into a Tumult, or raiſing a Party among the People, upon the ſcore of our Saviours being a Temporall Prince, to whom all men were to pay their Civill Allegeance, but he onely bids them, *Repent and be converted, that their ſins might be blotted out:* And ſuch Doctrine as this might be Preached, without any impeachment to *Cæſars* Power. Act. III. 19.

Again, when the *chief Prieſts and Rulers* did forbid the Apoſtles to Preach in the Name of Chriſt; as being madded with envy, that one whom they had lately ſo ignominiouſly Crucified, ſhould yet finde ſo much reputation among his Followers: The Apoſtles, upon this, doe not combine to ſtrengthen themſelves, and, under pretence of ſetting up Chriſts Kingdom, make a commotion in the State, but they pre-

Act. 11. 29. preſently fell to their Prayers, *Now Lord*, ſay they, *behold their threatnings, and grant unto thy ſervants, that with all boldneſs they may ſpeak thy Word.* They onely beg courage to ſpeak, and patience to ſuffer, and as for promoting Chriſts Throne in any other ſenſe, they ſeem altogether ſecure and careleſs.

As the Apoſtles, ſo did their Proſelytes behave themſelves, ſo farre from aiming at greatneſſe, or from ſeeking to improve their Converſion to the oppreſſion of others; ſo farre from depriving others of their Poſſeſſions, becauſe they were ungodly, that they ſold their own, and therein literally fulfilled that command of our Saviour, of *Sell all and follow me*; which the Profeſſors of our Times, are ſo farre from practiſing, that they are rather apt to do the clean contrary.

We reade indeed, that when the Chriſtians increaſed, there was an Accu-

Accuſation forged againſt them, as if they were *Men, who turned the World upſide down, who acted contrary to the Decrees of* Cæſar, *ſaying, There is another King, one Jeſus.* And *Paul* is by *Tertullus* expreſly called λοιμὸν, *a very Peſt*, i. a Turbulent, Unquiet Spirited man, and a *Raiſer of Sedition*; which Calumny, how falſe and ungrounded it was, *Paul* ſhews at large in his Apology, by averring to their faces, that *they could not prove the things which they had alleaged againſt him.* And afterwards, he is fully acquitted by *Feſtus* the Roman Deputy: *They*, ſayes he to Agrippa, *brought againſt him no Accuſation of ſuch things as I ſuppoſed*, *i.* of Treaſon, of Sedition or Rebellion, of Preaching Diſobedience, or non-payment of Tribute to *Cæſar*; for ſuch crimes as theſe, were properly under the Governors Cognizance; and none of theſe, it ſeems, were ſo much as

Acts 17. 6. 7.

Act 24.

ver. 13.

Act. 25. 8.

as imputed unto *Paul:* whereas had he ſo Preached up Chriſt, as to affirm that Jeſus was not onely a King, but that whoever did not ſubmit to him, ought immediately to be put out of Office; whereby there would never be ſuch a Crime as Treaſon, if Religion were once made the pretence to juſtifie it. Had this, I ſay, been *Paul*'s Doctrine, I ſuppoſe *Feſtus* neither would, nor durſt have been ſo favorable in his Cenſure.

And to put the matter out of queſtion on that Apoſtles part, though none was more zealous then he, for the advancing of Chriſts Kingdom in the right ſenſe; yet none was more ſtrict and ſevere in the enjoyning of Obedience unto all Powers over us, of what Religion ſoever; unleſſe we think men can be worſe then *Nero* and *Caligula* were, who Raigned about his time. And the Apoſtle gives a reaſon for it,

it, which will hold true in all Ages, *viz.* becauſe, *Authority is from God.* Power, by what Arts ſoever it is gained, and by what perſons ſoever it is exerciſed, yet when it is once acknowledged and ſworn too, it is to be looked upon by us, as nothing elſe but a Ray of Gods Soveraignty, and therefore to be accounted Sacred. Nor can any pretence of zeal, or mask of Religion, juſtifie Rebellion more now then heretofore: but the more piety appears to diſguiſe it, the more monſtrous it is: Since in effect it onely ſets up Chriſt againſt himſelf, and makes his Kingdom what he would not have it to be, *a kingdome of this World.* Rom. 13.

The very ſame command, and to the ſame purpoſe is enforced by *Peter, That they might by their obedience and meekneſſe, put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men, who cenſured them as evil doers:* The Word in the Original is κημοῦν, the very 1 Pet. 11. 12.

very ſame which was charged upon our Saviour, and it ſignifies in the *Helleniſtical* Phraſe, *State-Incendiaries*, *Incompatible with Civill Government*, and the like; which would have proved a very true and upright cenſure, in caſe the Chriſtians of thoſe Times, had ſo owned *Chriſt* for their *King*, as, upon his account, to withdraw their obedience from their Civil Soveraigns. The more apt therefore profane men were to miſ-interpret the Kingdom of Chriſt, the more carefull that Apoſtle would have Profeſſors to be, not to give any ſuch occaſion of offence.

Suitable to the Doctrine of theſe two great Apoſtles, was the practice of the Primitive Chriſtians, down from our Saviours, till long after *Conſtantines* time, as I could eaſily prove out of the moſt Ancient Records, [a] but that we live in an Age, when ſuch kinde of Learning is, by thoſe who leaſt underſtand

(a) *Tertul. Apolog: Orig: contrà Celſ. &c.*

ſtand it, accounted little leſſe then madneſſe; and that we may know which way the World is going, Ignorance begins once more to be the Mother of Devotion.

I ſhall therefore draw to a cloſe, for ſuch as Scripture will not ſatisfie, I do not intend to confute by humane Teſtimony, which is not onely fallible, but for the moſt part falſe: And I wiſh all that are at leaſure to peruſe this ſhort Treatiſe, would make this uſe of it, as to look after the Spirit, rather then the Splendor of Chriſtianity: For it is evident to all, that know any thing of Church Story, that ſo much as our Religion hath got in Pomp, it always loſt in Purity.

Thoſe who are ſtill doting upon Chriſts temporal Reign, in which they hope to have their ſhare; methinks the very ambition of ſuch deſires, ſhould convince them that they are not Chriſtian; but if they are ſo far gone in their Error, as to think nothing unlawful, ſo they may in their

ſenſe

ſenſe ſet up Chriſt; I heartily wiſh them to conſider, whileſt they go about ſuch enterprizes, 1. Whoſe buſineſs they do not. 2. Whoſe buſineſs they doe.

1. Firſt, Let them conſider whoſe buſineſſe they doe not; for, let them pretend what they will, they doe not the buſineſſe of Chriſt, ſince he hath abſolutely forbid it; and he will not thank us for exalting his Honor the wrong way: *Quis requiſivit hæc?* was Gods expoſtulation with the Jews, when they brought him Sacrifices, which he himſelf had commanded, becauſe they offered them not in a right manner. How much more will our Saviour by theſe words, reprove all thoſe, who for his ſake, venture upon actions which he at his death diſclaimed? The queſtion at the laſt day will not be, how many wicked we have killed, but how many we have converted? Not, how many we have deſtroyed for their unbelief, but how many we have turned from it?

it: We ſhall not be asked, what Honors and Preferments we have got by the Goſpel, but what we have left to follow it: And don't let any think, as ſome argue, that God hath allowed a diſpenſation for theſe laſt times; for times, and men, may alter, but the nature of things can never alter: Since the world is as inticing, and the Doctrine of the Goſpel as ſevere as ſelf-denying, now as ever: ſo that to reconcile theſe two together, *viz.* the pride of Life, with the Purity of Faith, I think no man can, I am ſure no Chriſtian ought to doe.

Secondly, As they who are otherwiſe minded, do not the buſineſs of Chriſt, ſo let them conſider whoſe buſineſſe they do. To underſtand which, we muſt take notice there are in Scripture recorded, two great Pretenders unto temporal Soveraignty, *Satan* and *Antichriſt.*

Firſt, *Satan:* we finde him directly claiming the glory of the world as his own: *Behold*, ſaith he to our Savior

Luke 4.6. *all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomſoever I will, I give it*: Which confident ſpeech of his, as our Saviour doth not confute, ſo, by
John 16. calling him after, *the God and Prince of this world*, he ſeems to own it for a truth. And indeed, if we conſider the manner, how; the Arts, by which the Kingdoms of the world are got and governed, we ſhall not much doubt of Satans veracity: Since Fraud and force, are thoſe two Pillars, upon wch almoſt all Empire is founded; and the great Maxime in State Policy, is that thing which God moſt abhors, *viz.* Hypocriſie and Diſſimulation. So that we need not much queſtion, but as the
Ja:11.15. *wiſdom* or *policy*, ſo likewiſe the *power of the world*, is not onely *earthly* and *ſenſual*, but likewiſe δαιμονιώδης, *Deviliſh*; and ſo much the more Deviliſh, the more Religion is pretẽded to procure it; for Satan never more acts his part, then whẽ he becoms an *angel of light*.

Secondly, Another pretence to worldly

worldly power diſcovered unto us in Scripture, is *Antichriſt*; of whom there are ſo many Marks and Characters given us, that it is no hard matter to know where his ſpirit works: Of him the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks, when having diſcourſed, that *whatever is in the world*, whether *the luſt of the fleſh*, i. Pleaſure; *or the luſt of the eyes*, i. Profit; or *the pride of life*, i. Honor, *it was not of the Father, but of the world*; he preſently tells them that Antichriſt was then beginning, intimating, that when ever he came to appear more manifeſtly, he would be very notorious and remarkable for the ſetting up thoſe three, which are, as one calls them, *The worlds Trinity*: And this he would do, not in ſo open and bare-faced a manner as Satan before him, but under the diſguiſe and maſk of Piety; for thus it is ſaid in the deſcription of him, which all ſides agree to be meant of *Antichriſt*, that *he had horns like a lamb, but he ſpake as a dragon*, i. he pretended meekneſs, but practiſed

1 John 2.16.

Rev. 13.11

ctiſed cruelty; as appears afterwards, in that he is ſaid to force his Religion upon others, and to make all men re-
ver. 16, 17. ceive his mark, or quit their means of living. And there are two Notes of *Antichriſt*, which will never fail, *viz.* Pride in himſelf, and Perſecution in reference to others.

Another deſcription we have of him, in that ſtile he aſſumes to himſelf, *viz.* *That he exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or worſhipped*: The meaning is, that he challenges authority and pre-eminence above all Kings and Emperors: For Kings, in Scripture, are called Gods; and σεβασμὸ (which we render, *that is worſhipped*) is that name in Greek, which ſignifies *Majeſty* in Engliſh, and is the title by which they did expreſs the *Grandeur* of the *Roman* Emperors, whom they called *Auguſti*, and the *Greeks* Σεβαστοὶ. According to this aſpiring diſpoſition and nature in him, ſo hath he his name of Anti-Chriſt given him; for Ἀντίχριστος may either be rendred Ἀντὶ *pro*, or *vice Chriſti*,

sti, that is, one who places himself in Christs stead, and behaves himself as his *Vicar* and *Deputy*: Or else ἀντί may signifie *contra Christum*, one that opposes and sets himself against Christ, *i.* not against his Person (for that he would get nothing by) but against the principal parts of Christs Doctrine and Worship; one that puts Christianity upon a new bottom, that inverts the design of it, and makes it, instead of being a *self-denying*, the most self-seeking Religion in the World.

How near this Doctrine of making Christs Kingdom an Earthly Monarchy, comes to the nature of Anti-Christ; nay, is indeed that very ladder by which that *man of sin* either already hath, or hereafter will ascend the Throne, is too apparent: For if Anti-Christ be come, as who can now doubt of it? (since the Apostle *Paul* tells us, *that in the latter time he needs must come*; and the Apostle *John* informs us, *that the latter time began in his age*) then we have no Character left

to deſcry him by, if this be not it, *viz.* his mixing the Chriſtian with the ſecular Intereſt; his making Piety a Pandar to Policy; his advancing Chriſt in ſhew, that thereby indeed he may advance himſelf; his centring godlineſs and greatneſs in the ſame Perſons; and ruling over the world as the Deputy of Chriſt: Which kinde of Doctrine whoever attempts to vent, let his zeal be never ſo fierce, and his pretences never ſo pious, he doth nothing but prepare the way for Antichriſt, whoſe coming will not be like our Saviours, *lowly and meek*, but with pomp and triumph. He doth not level the ways and ſuppreſs ambition, but ſwell it higher, until he ſinks down Religion under the weight of worldly Honor.

Before therefore I doe conclude this Diſcourſe, I ſhall take leave,

1. To bewail many of my deluded Brethren, who have a zeal, but ſo little, according to knowledge, that even then when they moſt fiercely oppoſe Anti-

Antichriſt, they onely do his work; and while they proceed upon falſe Principles, juſt draw a Circle, in which, the more they labor to go from the point they fixed on at firſt, the nearer they draw unto it.

2. I muſt lament the great ſtupor and inſenſibility of the Preachers of the Goſpel in our days, who can be ſo careleſs in times of ſo eminent danger: And though others may perhaps plead ſomething in their own excuſe, yet how can they anſwer it, who ſcrupled at Ceremonies (which were declared, and every one knows to be, in their own nature, indifferent) and yet are ſilent under a Principle which will certainly bring them back, in a far other manner then they were at firſt impoſed? ſhal thoſe who were affrighted at the ſhadow of a Lyon, not tremble to hear him roaring? what folly is it to flee from the tail of the Dragon, and yet not be afraid when we perceive his ſting? Let us not be miſtaken, it is not the garb or dreſs of Ceremonies, it is not this or that form of Worſhip, which preſently makes it Antichriſtian, but it is the challenging a power to impoſe them upon others. So that without fixing the name of *Antichriſt* upon any

any party of men, which makes the Controverſie conjectural onely, and moſt commonly uncharitable; this I ſhall be bold to affirm, that to impoſe by force any form of Worſhip, and thereby deny others that liberty of choice, which, whilſt we impoſe, we aſſume to our ſelves: To determine the indifferency of things, and, in reference to Religious ends, to make that neceſſary, which by nature was made, and God hath left free: And above all, to make Chriſt a temporal Prince, and under the notion of advancing him, to exalt our ſelves, and Lord it over others; this is nothing elſe but the ſpirit of Antichriſt, ſince ſuch Doctrine as this, is no way contained in our Saviours Goſpel.

I ſhall ſpeak out and end; I earneſtly pray, that that excellent Principle, I mean, *Liberty of conſcience*, which firſt led us out of Popery, doe not by our too wanton abuſe of it, lead us back again into it. This I am ſure of, that for men firſt to call themſelves, *The Godly*, (a ſtile which *Paul*, after all his Revelations, did not ſo boldly aſſume) and then upon that ſcore, to make themſelves our Governors, is without any ſtreining the road thither; for we know who it is, that by ſuch Arts, hath got no ſmall Dominion in the world: and where ever ſuch Tenets prevail, they are onely fore-runners of Antichriſts Temporal reign, and ſo far as he can ſuppreſs it, of Chriſtianities ruine.

FINIS.